

PARENT **I**NVOLVEMENT **T**ASK **F**ORCE

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: S.C. EDUCATION ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 1998, SECTION 10.

Report and Recommendations To The South Carolina Education Oversight Committee

October 15, 1999

Vision Statement

In our vision for parent involvement in South Carolina, we urge a renewed commitment to partnerships among family, school and community that support parental responsibility for our children's health, well-being and accelerated learning.

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FOREWORD

Parent Involvement and its powerful influence on school improvement and academic achievement is well researched and universally accepted. In South Carolina's Education Accountability Act (EAA) of 1998, the General Assembly acknowledges perhaps the most significant research finding "*...students achieve more when their parents are involved in their education, regardless of their socio-economic status, ethnic/racial background, or the parent's level of education.*" Student achievement demands parent participation and support. Teacher quality and parent involvement will be critical determinants of the level of success for education reform in South Carolina.

Perhaps it is the direct value of parent involvement ...the fact that it is so obvious, so much a given...that makes it so tremendously frustrating to those who wonder why stronger involvement is not found much more often. "Almost ninety percent of the public believes that the lack of support from parents is a serious problem for public school teachers today."¹ Yet year after year the problem continues to haunt our education system, and the subsequent inadequacies become seemingly more insurmountable. The real challenge lies in transforming knowledge into practice, and into results. Too often we attack the parents, suggesting they may not care about their children's education or promoting the education of their offspring. We accuse our families of working too many jobs, for too many hours, and neglecting the responsibilities of parenthood. We understand the complex, and often unrelenting, demands on today's diverse families, but we hold firm the belief that regardless of circumstances parents do desire the best education possible for their children. "Seventy-two percent of children, ages 10-13, said they would like to talk to their parents more about schoolwork. Almost half of older students, ages 14-17, agreed."² The responsibility for parent involvement does fall squarely on the shoulders of parents; however, again, the challenge lies in developing sound methodology to provide useful information and practical options to motivate and enable parent involvement. This challenge must be inclusive of all levels within the education community from state government to the teacher in the classroom and the community at large. We must accept the realization that parent involvement accountability is in essence a shared responsibility...an educational partnership.

With this information in mind, the Parent Involvement Task Force requests that you consider the practices and recommendations presented herein. We believe our efforts will exert a positive impact on student academic achievement and behavior in the state of South Carolina.

Parent Involvement Task Force
1999

¹ *Time/CNN, 1997*

² *National Commission on Children, 1991*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. LEGISLATIVE DIRECTIVE

The South Carolina General Assembly directed the establishment of a task force "...to review current state programs and policies for participation in their children's education." The more specific charge to the task force was "to look for ways to encourage and induce parents to oversee and support student achievement and personal behavior that contributes to academic improvement." The full text of the related provision set forth in the South Carolina Education Accountability Act of 1998, Section 10, reads as follows:

"When parents are involved with their children's education, students achieve more, regardless of socio-economic status, ethnic/racial background, or the parents' education level. The more extensive the parent involvement, the higher level of the student achievement. Therefore, the Education Oversight Committee shall appoint a task force to review current state programs and policies for parent participation in their children's education. The task force is to look for ways to encourage and induce parents to oversee and support student academic performance and behavior that contributes to academic improvement. The membership of the task force should include: public school educators from rural, urban and suburban schools and districts, parents of public school children, social service representatives; and a juvenile justice representative. The task force shall provide its report and recommendations to the Education Oversight Committee by October 15, 1999."

B. PARENT INVOLVEMENT TASK FORCE (PITF) MEMBERSHIP

The twenty-nine individuals appointed to the Parent Involvement Task Force (PITF) represent the membership set forth in the Education Accountability Act provision and other representation: a balanced cross-section of the state in terms of representation for the six congressional districts, special needs, at risk, preK-grade 12, race and gender. A biographical sketch of each member, with reference to their representation and parental involvement activities, and personal definitions of "accountability" are found in APPENDIX A.

C. METHODOLOGY

Work Plan, Time Table, Staff

The PITF organized its work across a nine-month period and met formally for the first time on February 17, 1999. Thereafter, the PITF participated in day-long monthly work sessions, with the final session occurring on October 7, 1999. The work plan and time table are presented in APPENDIX B. The PITF initiative was staffed by Trisha Pizzuti Bockus, Program Coordinator, Education Oversight Committee.

Framework for PITF Review and Analysis

The PITF adopted a structured agenda to guide its work consisting of the following components:

- Review and analysis of findings from the large body of research that exists about parent involvement to identify critical issues, barriers and best practices;
- Review and analysis of South Carolina parent involvement policy and practices;
- Formal presentations to learn from national authorities about family-school-community frameworks which support school improvement goals and influence academic achievement; and
- Study of effective home-school communications to support parent understanding of changes in state policy affecting the education system, student placement decisions and other accountability measures.

Working References

The PITF initiative was supported by an extensive compilation of research in the form of written studies, journal articles, narrative briefs and abstracts authored by nationally recognized research scientists, practitioners, organizations and agencies. The bibliography is provided in APPENDIX E.

In addition, the PITF conducted independent research and investigated the status of parent involvement initiatives in their respective school districts and schools; and received formal presentations of information on the following:

South Carolina parent involvement-related policies, programs and practices, and state level initiatives which assist school districts in their parent involvement efforts (State Department of Education staff);

findings from a middle grades parent involvement needs assessment conducted through the state's Middle Grades Schools State Policy Initiative-MGSSPI (State Project Director of the MGSSPI);

local school district parent/family literacy programs and parent involvement initiatives targeting various grade levels (local school district parent program coordinators);

state-adopted grade level content standards, PACT-Palmetto Achievement Challenge Tests and clarification of the test administration schedule (State Department of Education staff);

Working References continued

Education Accountability Act requirements for development of district and school report cards (Education Oversight Committee staff);

School Improvement Council parent member training, including home and school parent involvements which have proven to help students be better learners (USC-School Improvement Council Assistance Project);

strategies found in the Target 2000 Act parent education pilot programs which had the greatest influence on increasing parent involvement (External Evaluation, USC-Educational Policy Center); and

nationally recognized frameworks that support family-school-community collaborative partnerships with focus on school goals and improvements (National Network of Partnership Schools).

The PITF also received a summary of Parent Involvement-related legislation enacted in other states.

D. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The PITF found that the critical issues associated with parent involvement, as described below, are most often cited in the body of related literature. These issues are applicable to the state, the education community, parents and the community at large. They also reflect the opinions expressed by South Carolina educators, parents and administrators who shared information and insight based on experience with the PITF. National and state studies, and selected programs in South Carolina, offer various approaches for addressing these issues and overcoming related barriers.

Leadership is viewed as the most important factor for making parent involvement a priority in any State... and with parents. Consistent leadership at all levels of government and education is seen as the most appropriate vehicle for promoting the importance of parent involvement statewide. Leadership must assume a constant vigil to maintain momentum, clarify the expectations, and advise on the benefits to be derived from parent involvement. Leadership actions can include public awareness campaigns, enactment of state policy to improve parent involvement practices statewide, and state and local (education and community at large) implementation of proven best practices.

Effective communications between school and home ranks as an essential component for influencing parent involvement. Parents desire to know the expectations for learning within the classroom from grade level to grade level. Parents want to be informed of changes in the public education system that affect their children, and want to be part of the decision-making for their children. Teachers need feedback from parents to help them understand characteristics of the children they teach and the home environment from which they come. Channels of communication must be open and friendly.

Accessibility for engaging parents is an issue which can be impacted by everything from the school's climate and teacher attitude to childcare needs, parent personal feeling of inadequacy and/or attitude, time constraints, workplace constraints, transportation, lack of

FINDINGS AND RE COMMENDATIONS continued

assuming responsibility, etc. The key is to foster a relationship among and across schools, parents, the workplace and community to address these issues and work together to promote practices for overcoming barriers that prevent parent involvement.

Training in parent involvement for both teachers and parents is necessary for understanding the various types of parent involvement and how each can impact on children's learning and overall school improvement. Knowledge about family diversity and individual learning styles can provide insight for promoting and implementing successful family involvements and connections with the education system. There are various types of parent involvement that can be meaningful and effective. Training in parent involvement practices at all levels will enable a process, rather than a series of actions.

Parent responsibility for parent involvement and how teachers and schools can address this issue is singled out as a major critical issue. The research suggests, as do South Carolina parent program coordinators, that the initial step to encourage and foster parent's involvement in their children's education must be initiated by the educators, in particular, the teacher. The teacher plays an important role in facilitating a bridge between home and school that can support the parent role.

Parent involvement staffing and funding issues surfaced throughout the research, but not without reference to some local innovative and creative approaches, and requests for increased funding. Parent liaisons at the local level serve as a facilitator to help both teachers and parents in building a partnership between home and school that is in the best interests of the student.

Partnerships involving the family, school and community have received rave reviews throughout the literature for enhancing parent involvement in their children's education. There are many organizations which provide assistance and materials to states, districts and schools on how to create and implement meaningful partnerships to support parent involvement. The PITF reviewed several methods for partnerships including frameworks with suggested approaches for various types of parent involvement, action team and other models, and national standards for parent involvement.

With these issues in mind, and consideration of other relevant findings about barriers and best practices for parent involvement, the PITF endorsed 25 state actions and 19 local actions which are presented in this report under five broad recommendation headings:

Recommendation 1.0:

Establish a formal framework to encourage increased parent involvement.

Recommendation 2.0:

Require parent involvement training for all school staff.

Recommendation 3.0: Emphasize parental responsibilities for their children's success in school, preK-grade 12.

Recommendation 4.0:

Allow increased opportunity and flexibility for parent-teacher contacts.

Recommendation 5.0:

Monitor and evaluate parent involvement efforts.

INTRODUCTION

*"To enable families and communities to become informed about and involved in children's education and in the schools, partnerships must be viewed as an essential component of school organization that influences student development and learning, rather than as an optional activity or a matter of public relations. It takes time, organization, and effort to develop a good program."*³

Research findings over a thirty-year period relating to *parent involvement* point to profound and comprehensive benefits for students, family and schools when parents and families members become participants in their children's education and their lives. In a series of publications produced from 1981 to 1995, researchers Anne Henderson and Nancy Berla cite more than eighty-five studies documenting the benefits of parent involvement. They say the evidence is now beyond dispute -- "*when parents are involved in their child's education at home their children do better in school.*"⁴

Dr. Joyce L. Epstein of the Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships and the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS), Johns Hopkins University, and her colleagues, have greatly contributed to the body of research on parent involvement in the education of their children. The NNPS action handbook notes that, from numerous studies about best practices across all grade levels, several approaches evolved to encourage and support partnerships among school, family and community. Epstein's studies led to identification of the six types of parent involvement (or six types of caring, as she refers to them) presented below.

**Parenting • Communicating • Volunteering • Learning at Home •
Decision Making • Collaborating with Community**

These six types of parent involvement offer a framework of choices for developing more comprehensive programs of school, family and community partnerships. The NNPS offers sample practices unique to each type of involvement to address the particular challenges that each type of involvement present.

In these historical times of education reform, national standards for education have been adopted, compacts for education involvement and commitment are being signed by parents and students, and standards in other areas are being considered. Researchers have documented that the "overall importance of parent and family involvement is the foundation

³ School, Family and Community Partnerships, Your Handbook for Action. J.L. Epstein, L. Coates, J.K.C. Salinas, M.G. Sanders and B.S. Simon. 1997.

⁴ *The Evidence Grows, 1981; The Evidence Continues to Grow; and A New Generation of Evidence: The Family is Critical to Student Achievement, 1995.* National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs. National PTA. 1998.

Introduction continued

for all other education reforms and is, therefore, deserving the same consideration and attention."⁵ Based on the comprehensive research findings that connect parent involvement to student success, the National PTA established national standards for parent/family involvement programs. The National PTA standards, which build upon Epstein's framework for parent involvement partnerships, serve three purposes:

- to promote meaningful parent and family participation;
- to raise awareness regarding the components of effective programs;and
- to provide guidelines for schools that wish to improve their programs.

The National PTA national standards for parent/family involvement, as aligned to Epstein's six types of parent involvement, and quality indicators on which to measure effectiveness are presented in EXHIBIT I.

In its review of the substantial body of literature on parent involvement, the Parent Involvement Task Force (PITF) identified significant barriers and challenges concerning parent involvement and the various relationships necessary for parent involvement: (1) lack of "how to"; (2) lack of understanding about family diversity; (3) student learning styles; (4) teaching practices; and (5) other factors such as accessibility, work schedules, transportation, respect for the roles of parent, teachers. In its review of South Carolina current practices, the PITF found similar barriers and challenges. There is encouraging evidence from research and South Carolina practices that barriers can be overcome and parent involvement can be supported and sustained.

The PITF found that parent involvement activities are commonplace throughout state and local programs and initiatives targeting children during early development and at the elementary level. This is largely due to South Carolina's history of education reform in recent years. Legislation enacted in 1984, 1989, 1993 and 1998, respectively, emphasized and supported improvements in early childhood by providing programs addressing parents as the first teacher for their children and educational programs to help them with parenting skills. Evaluations of the early pilots of these programs identified the most effective practices within those programs. These findings provided insight to other districts and schools when the parent/family literacy programs were implemented statewide. State funding also became available to employ coordinators for these early childhood programs.

Through the efforts of the program coordinators, South Carolina is overcoming many parent involvement challenges. Many successful relationships have been built and sustained through these programs. Parents of children served by these programs are gaining knowledge of infant care, health care issues, child development issues and good parenting skills. The best practices used in the programs include: home visits, developmental screening, family

⁵ National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs. National PTA. 1998.

Introduction continued

centers, and parent seminars and workshops. These and other program components are combined with nationally validated parent/family programs that are also available to schools, such as Even Start, MotheRead, and Parents as Teachers. Strong leadership skills of the parent program coordinators include: (1) focus on the programs and delivery of the services; (2) development of model programs; and (3) research-based practices.

Vigilant emphasis, renewed state policies and increased funding for these early childhood initiatives...and dedicated local program coordinators...can all be credited to the success of parent involvement in South Carolina. The First Steps legislation, the Governor's compact initiative with teachers, parents and students, and a dedicated office for early childhood education at the State Department of Education suggest the state continues its focus on the lives of young children and their families; however, emphasis at the middle and upper grades is equally deserving....and important.

The PITF review of South Carolina parent involvement practices at the middle and high school grades yielded limited results. We could find no state mechanism in place for monitoring the practices and collecting data on parent involvement at these grade levels. We were made aware of a resource book available to schools and districts which provides information about effective programs in South Carolina and limited references to programs nationwide. Although most of the programs referenced are at the elementary level, there is reference to programs targeted at the middle and high school scattered around the state: Beaufort, Charleston, Greenville, Hampton 2, Richland One and Richland Two. We could find no summarized status of these or other programs. The resource book also offers a fairly long bibliography of parent involvement research. Based on the experiences of PITF members, and parent program coordinators from several districts who provided formal presentations to the PITF, we learned that there is a serious decline in parent involvement at the middle grades and high schools in South Carolina. These educators expressed the need for the state to address this gap. The fairly large body of literature that now exists about parent involvement confirms that there is gap in practice at these levels all across the states. Some researchers note that effective parent involvement at the elementary levels is a precursor to effective parent involvement at the feeder middle and high schools. The research also points to strategies and practices to "beef up" the efforts to enable parent involvement -- at home and at school -- for those grade levels.

The PITF concludes that South Carolina does have statutory provisions that establish an expectation of and responsibilities for parent involvement. The breakdown appears to be consistency in emphasis and implementation at all grade levels. From our review and discussions with educators and parents across the state, it is as if parent involvement is an add-on or a "nice to have" rather than a necessary component of educational practice.

The PITF considers parent involvement in their children's education to be vital. South Carolina must address all gaps in practice to ensure a system that enables a continuum of parent involvement that supports the state's overall goals for public education and its students. Lack of parent involvement practice will continue to exist across the state until there is system to enable, support and sustain it. In contemplating renewed policy and practice for South Carolina, the PITF believes there is ample research and existing practices

Introduction continued

within the state which provide insight for incorporating a foundation for parent involvement into the educational system. The PITF desires South Carolina to rethink parental

involvement; thereby changing from a service delivery approach to a partnership approach.

Our goals for this report, and the specific actions recommended herein, are:

- to re-tool parent involvement with a framework that drives collaborative partnerships among all stakeholders;
- to encourage state policy and funding to support research-based practices which have the greatest impact on increasing and improving parent involvement; and
- to promote parent involvement as a state and local priority, including raising expectations on the part of all stakeholders.

Through its recommendations, the PITF offers a state framework on which a continuum of parent involvement partnerships can be built and supported. The framework promotes leadership, awareness, outreach, training and evaluating results--factors that are grounded in the research as influencing effective parent involvement. The specific actions recommended by the PITF share the responsibilities for parent involvement among all the stakeholders. The stakeholders are the individuals listed below which the Education Accountability Act refers to as "accepting actions to improve classroom practice and school performance."

**Governor, General Assembly, State Board of Education, State Department of Education,
Colleges and Universities, Local School Boards, Administrators, Teachers, Parents,
Students, Community**

Definition of Terms

PARENTS - To be interpreted broadly to include mother, father, guardian, grandparent(s) and other individuals in the life of the child who are responsible for the child's care and well-being.

PARENT LIAISON – An individual who bridges the gap between parents, teachers, and school. The parent liaison is a paid employee whose primary responsibility is to increase positive communications between parents and schools to enhance parental involvement. The parent liaison fosters activities designed to: assist students in achieving academic success; nurture emotional and social needs; address problems; and develop interpersonal skills. The parent liaison helps families participate more fully in their child's educational process through various methods designed for home and school. The parent liaison helps link parents to community resources.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE – Direct services, resources, informational workshops, material (print, video/audio), instructional aids etc.

SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES – [often referred to as Local Board of School Trustees] The body authorized by state and local legislation to manage and control the schools within a school district.

**National Standards for Parent/Family
Involvement Programs**

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| Standard I. | Communicating – Communication between home and school is regular, two-way, and meaningful. |
| Standard II. | Parenting – Parenting skills are promoted and supported. |
| Standard III. | Student Learning – Parents play an integral role in assisting student learning. |
| Standard IV. | Volunteering – Parents are welcome in the school, and their support and assistance are sought. |
| Standard V. | School Decision Making and Advocacy – Parents are full partners in the decisions that affect children and families. |
| Standard VI. | Collaborating with Community – Community resources are used to strengthen schools, families, and student learning. |

PARENT INVOLVEMENT: Descriptions and Practices

A. DEFINITION

When the PITF began its initial dialogue about parent involvement, we expressed a series of thoughts about "what parent involvement means" and we then attempted to develop a common definition to work from. We re-visited this issue several times during the course of our work. As our knowledge of parent involvement broadened from our review of the research, we learned that definitions were not consistent across the research. Even the researchers address the issue of the various definitions. Cochran and Dean, in 1991, note that the definitions tend to be based on perceptions and issues that can focus parent involvement efforts. Some researchers cite the need for a framework for understanding the perspectives. Some perspectives found in the research include the following:

Parents as volunteers, parents as policy-makers, and parents as facilitators of children's development (Moore, 1991).

and Parents as first educator in the home; parents as partners with the school; parents as advocate for all children and youth in society (National PTA Board of Directors, 1993).

responsibility Provide success for all children; see the whole child; and sharing (D. Davis, 1991).

Davis defines parent involvement from a shifting perspective, i.e. as society, communities and schools restructure, so will parent involvement be transformed. He notes a paradigm shift from parent focus to family focus; from family to community agencies; from school to home/neighborhood setting; from eager parents to hard-to-reach parents.

For the past ten years, all of these aforementioned parent involvement concepts and theories have been studied and new approaches have evolved. Rather than constrain itself to an existing definition, the PITF looked for common parent involvement approaches which would support a foundation or system for parent involvement for the state, yet provide flexibility to schools and districts in the actual design and implementation of a parent involvement process. Joyce L. Epstein of the National Network of Partnership Schools (Johns Hopkins University) identified six types of parent involvement to guide schools in tailoring or customizing their programs and practices to support goals for improving the school: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making and collaborating with the community. The approaches in Epstein's framework for building parent involvement partnerships include the common threads found throughout the literature.

DEFINITION continued

The PITF views the six types of involvement as conducive for 1) building greater opportunities for parents to become more involved and participate in their child's education, 2) making parent involvement a standard component in the education system, 3) supporting parents in their role as parent and teacher in the home, and 4) providing an overall system to bring about greater accountability for teaching and learning.

Rather than defining parent involvement, the PITF adopted the following vision statement to reflect the collaborative partnership approach that it considers as a means for increasing parent involvement in South Carolina and supporting the role and responsibility of parents.

B. VISION STATEMENT

In our vision for parent involvement in South Carolina, we urge a renewed commitment to partnerships among family, school and community that support parental responsibility for our children's health, well-being and accelerated learning.

C. SOUTH CAROLINA PRACTICES

From the mid 1970s to mid 1980s, the General Assembly has provided funding for programs which encouraged and required parent involvement. This funding was directed to early childhood programs and initiatives which required parent contact and involvement, but with a limited focus on training programs for parents. These efforts related to how parents could enhance their children's learning and elevate their own level of education. Later reform enactments broadened early childhood initiatives which continued to influence South Carolina's perception of parent involvement. Additional provisions enabled parent involvement in school decision-making.

From 1989 to 1993, legislative enactments provided additional focus on parent involvement and funding for early childhood initiatives with parent components (Target 2000 Act-Education Reform for the Next Decade Act of 1989; and Early Childhood Education and Academic Assistance Act of 1993). Act 135 required a state program for parent involvement with specified goals and components. The Act also expanded the role of the School Improvement Councils to assist in long range school planning. EXHIBITS C-I and C-II provide additional information about these Acts and their impact, and a matrix of South Carolina programs indicating the parent components, targeted audience, strategies and funding. A description for each of the programs referenced on the matrix is provided in APPENDIX C.

The Education Accountability Act of 1998 added provisions for increased parent participation. These involvements, which are noted in EXHIBIT C-I-b, are currently being translated into practice across the state.

SOUTH CAROLINA PRACTICES continued

One of the major findings of the PITF review regarding South Carolina practice is the lack of timely and consistent communications from school to home about changes in the public education system. The PITF found that there are inconsistencies in the information and understanding about the 1998 Education Accountability Act provisions. To improve communications relating to the Act's "accountability" measures, the PITF directed the following input to the Education Oversight Committee and State Department of Education staff:

- 1) Develop and disseminate information to parents statewide about South Carolina's grade level standards using a parent-friendly format and easily understood language, and provide examples of the standards;
- 2) Include parent involvement information on the school report card, to include the capacity of parent involvement occurring at home and at school; and
- 3) For all terms used on the report card, also provide a definition for parent understanding.

Although parent involvement tends to be fragmented and there are differing perceptions about parent involvement in the state, the coordinators of early childhood and parent/family literacy programs offered the following as some of the right steps to enhance and increase parent involvement:

Making a commitment [on the part of the district] to connect parents and schools and to re-engage the family and community in the education system;

Improving business and school connections to promote better understanding of parent involvement in their children's educational growth and the reciprocal benefits to be derived from enabling workplace policies;

Understanding the diversity of the community and family life;

Providing the means (state and local support) to support and sustain involvement through paid and volunteer staff; and

Providing technical assistance to schools and districts in their parent involvement efforts.

SOUTH CAROLINA PARENT INVOLVEMENT LEGISLATION

<p>Parent Involvement in School Decision-Making</p> <p><i>1977 Education Finance Act; and</i></p> <p><i>1984 Education Improvement Act</i></p>	<p>In 1977 education reform enactments heightened awareness about the importance of parent participation and enabled parent's input in an advisory capacity for school decision-making (Education Finance Act of 1977). Subsequent enactments promoted awareness to encourage community involvement which targeted the community and parents to volunteer and become involved in the schools; and broadened the role of parent input from an advisory committee capacity to serving on a School Improvement Council whose role now included assisting in monitoring school improvement, advising on the use of certain school-awarded funds and assisting in preparing the school's annual report which focused on school needs, goals and objectives (Education Improvement Act of 1984). School Improvement Councils have been in operation for years and continue to facilitate the school improvement process, including assisting in strategic planning and long-range plan development. The PITF believes that the current School Improvement Council provides a meaningful system for parent input, but feels it can be improved. The Action Team approach that is folded in to the NNPS' partnership framework for parent involvement can enhance Councils and facilitate more broad-based parent understanding of school components and a greater collaboration among parent, school and community for school decision-making. The PITF addresses Councils and other school decision-making groups in Recommendation 1.0.</p>
<p>Parent Programs which Support Parents As Their Child's First Teacher</p> <p><i>1989 Target 2000 Education Reform for the Next Decade Act</i></p>	<p>Legislative action in 1989 provided support to the concept of "parents in their role as first teachers of their children" when funding was made available to pilot parent education programs (<i>Target 2000-Education Reform for the Next Decade Act of 1989</i>). These pilot programs served parents with children from ages newborn through age 5 who were considered to be at risk for school failure. These programs were reviewed for their effectiveness through an external evaluation. The evaluator found common components and strategies across all programs: family literacy/adult education; support groups and workshops; home visits; developmental screenings; parent instructional packets; and monthly newsletters. Immunizations were also addressed through the programs. Of these common strategies, the evaluator identified <u>family literacy, parent support groups and workshops, and monthly home visits</u> as having the most positive influence for involving parents in the education of their children: Further, the evaluator identified all except one of the original pilots as highly effective in meeting their goals and objectives (<i>Swick, K.- SC Educational Policy Center-USC Columbia</i>). The networking between and among the coordinators of these district pilot programs still exists. The State Board of Education reported in the <u>1998 EIA Assessment Report</u> that based on 1997 CSAB-Cognitive Skills Assessment Battery data the children served in these pilot programs generally tested ready for first grade at 2 to 18% higher rate than children among the general population.</p>
<p>Parent/Family Literacy Programs</p> <p><i>1993 Early Childhood Education and Academic Assistance Act</i></p>	<p>Funding to implement parent/family literacy programs was provided to all school districts by Act 135, of 1993 and the effective Target 2000 Act Parent Program sites were commissioned to serve as technical assistance sites to help other districts. These programs, which focused on literacy of the whole family, integrated various approaches and strategies, which brought parents into the education process. For family literacy, comprehensive components considered to be most effective in preventing school failure included: adult education, early childhood education, parenting skills and a <i>different</i> PACT – Parent And Children Together – Time Together. Effective strategies across the programs include support groups and workshops, home visits, developmental screenings, parent instructional packets, monthly newsletters, immunizations and library cards.</p>

Parent Involvement Programs for Grades 4-8 <i>1993 Early Childhood Education and Academic Assistance Act</i>	<p>Act 135 of 1993 directed the "State Department of Education to develop a parent involvement program for these grade levels and specified the inclusion of these goals: "improving parent participation in their child's progress at school; ensuring a smooth transition between level of school and phases of education; increased communication; and provide greater accountability between parent, school and children." The statute further requires school visits by parents, training sessions on communication, student discipline, importance of homework, the taking and understanding of standardized testing and test scores, and general literacy.</p> <p>These components are consistent with what the research suggests for enabling parents to become more involved. The State Department of Education has not provided information on implementation of this program.</p>
Parent Involvements <i>1998 Education Accountability Act</i>	<p>Other parent involvements are addressed in the Education Accountability Act of 1998. Examples: requirements for parent-teacher conferences for students performing below standards in Grades 3-8 and parent input for development of academic assistance plans for those students; input into the district's accountability plan; SIC school progress report, which is to be separate from that of the principal's progress report; and requirement for parent receipt of the school report card.</p>

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PARENT INVOLVEMENT INITIATIVES

Initiatives

	<i>Act 135 Parent/Family Literacy</i>	<i>Even Start Family Literacy</i>	<i>Adult Education</i>	<i>Volunteerism</i>	<i>Healthy School</i>	<i>Americorps/ Learn & Serve</i>	<i>LINC</i>	<i>Title I</i>	<i>Extended-Day/ After-School</i>
Target Population	EC Elm Mid Sec X	EC Elm Mid Sec X X	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec X X X X	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec X X X X	EC Elm Mid Sec X X X	EC Elm Mid Sec X X X X	EC Elm Mid Sec X X X
Funding Source	EIA State	Title I, Part B Federal	EFA – State WIA – Title I	EIA State	Federal CDC	Federal	Private Foundation Grant	Title I, Parts A, C, D, Federal	Grant from DHHS Federal
Funding Allocation	4.6 million	\$1.4 million	\$19,332,655	\$90,000	\$680,000	\$2.1 million	\$26,000	\$92 million	\$3.5 million

Program Strategies

	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec
Parenting Training	X	X X				X X X X		X X X X	
Family Literacy	X	X X	X X X X			X X X X		X	X X X
Home visits	X	X X				X X X X		X X X X	
Group Meetings	X	X X				X X X X		X X X X	
Literacy & Ed. Enhancement	X	X X		X		X X X X		X	X X X
Community Collaboration	X	X X		X	X X X X	X X X X	X X X X	X X X X	

Support Strategies

	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec
Childcare	X	X X	X			X X X X		X X X X	X X X
Transportation	X	X X	X X			X X X X		X X X X	
Mentoring	X	X X	X	X X X X		X X X X	X X X	X X X X	

Organizational Strategies

	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec
Aligned with SDE Standards	X	X X	X	X X X X		X X X X	X X X	X X X X	X X X
State/Regional Networking	X	X X	X			X X X X	X X X	X X X X	X X X
Curriculum Available to Districts	X	X X	X	X X X X		X X X X		X X X X	
Staff Development & Training	X	X X	X X	X X X X		X X X X	X X X	X X X X	X X X

Accountability Strategies

	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec
Performance Indicators	X	X X	X			X X X X		As of September	
Program Evaluation	X*	X X**	***			X X X X	X X X	X X X X	
Data Available	X	X X	***			X X X X		X X X X	X X X

*No formal evaluation, part of renewal plan system of evaluation.

**Formal local evaluation and required federal evaluation.

***Beginning in 2000 evaluation of Family Literacy program will be required under WIA.

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PARENT INVOLVEMENT INITIATIVES

Initiatives

	<i>McKinney Homeless Assistance Program</i>	<i>SC Literacy Resource Center</i>	<i>Character Education</i>	<i>Young African American Males Action Team</i>	<i>GED</i>				
Target Population	EC Elm Mid Sec X X X X	EC Elm Mid Sec X X X X	EC Elm Mid Sec X X	EC Elm Mid Sec X X X	EC Elm Mid Sec X	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec
Funding Source	Federal	State Adult Ed	Federal	State Funds	Local (Based on Testing Fees)				
Funding Allocation	\$350,000	Included in Adult Ed	\$250,000	\$95,650					

Program Strategies

	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec
Parenting Training	X X X X								
Family Literacy	X X X X								
Home visits	X X X X								
Group Meetings	X X X X								
Literacy & Ed. Enhancement	X X X X	X X							
Community Collaboration	X X X X	X X	X X	X X X					

Support Strategies

	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec
Childcare									
Transportation	X X X X								
Mentoring	X X X X								

Organizational Strategies

	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec
Aligned with SDE Standards			X X						
State/Regional Networking	X X X X	X							
Curriculum Available to Districts		X X							
Staff Development & Training	X X X X	X X	X X						

Accountability Strategies

	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec	EC Elm Mid Sec
Performance Indicators									
Program Evaluation	X X X X	X							
Data Available	X X X X	X							

D. BEST PRACTICES ACCORDING TO THE RESEARCH

PARENTS

- Uphold high expectations for academic achievement.
- Expect success and tell your child you expect their best.
- Provide secure, stable, safe home environment.
- Join school groups such as School Improvement Council, PTO/PTA, Booster club, etc.
- Limit television, video and computer games.
- Set a bedtime to provide adequate sleep and rest.
- Provide adequate nutrition.
- Get child to school on time every day.
- Talk with child about school; know their friends.
- Eat lunch at school with your child; visit the classroom.
- Help child find homework support through friends, after school programs, homework buddy, and teachers.
- Check homework to be sure completed.
- Designate well lit place in home to study.
- Stay involved in child's whole life by monitoring activities.
- Know where and with whom your child is.
- Talk to other parents.
- Establish parent networks to communicate how to provide positive activities and safe environments for children.
- Communicate with teacher by phone, letter, Email, or personal visit.
- Build partnership with child's teacher to promote successful school experience.
- Attend school events and child's performances.
- Serve as school volunteer.
- Follow public policy that impacts your school.
- Ask for information from school to help you as a parent.
- Ask for information from school on how you can help your child with schoolwork.
- Recognize that as a parent your role changes as your child grows.
- Recognize that parental involvement in middle and high school is equally as critical as in elementary school.
- Be a parent first, be a friend second.
- Model your behaviors in ways you desire your children to follow, i.e. let them observe you read, limit your television viewing, visit school, be active in community, be inquisitive.
- Encourage your child to be physically active.
- Tell your child encouraging words everyday.
- Show your child you love him/her.
- Learn about child development for each stage of growth from infant to preschool, elementary, middle and high school.
- Get to know the guidance counselor.
- Talk with your child, teacher, and guidance counselor on "how to be successful in school."
- Request information about state requirements that impact on your child and seek clarifications through PTA/PTO, principal, and teacher.
- Show your child you are interested in them at school and in their school, i.e. talk with your child everyday about what he/she did in school, about the friends they have made at school, and inquire about the things on display in their classroom.
- Inquire about the school's/teacher's expectations for parent involvement.
- Read to your child and let your child read to you.
- Adopt the D.E.A.R. theory: Drop Everything and Read, i.e. on a daily basis.
- Stimulate your children's thoughts; ask questions.
- Provoke curiosity to start an intrinsic learning pattern.
- Initiate inquires about your child's attendance (middle and high school, in part...)
- Let your child know and see that you support school efforts.
- Keep interested and informed; ask about curriculum and request copy of course syllabus.

TEACHERS AND SCHOOLS

- Contact each family at beginning of the year.
- Provide a friendly atmosphere -- all faculty and staff need to ensure a warm climate that makes parents feel welcome.
- Adopt a school pledge about “the school’s inviting friendly, i.e. the climate” whole school and all staff.
- Send weekly newsletters in efficient and timely manner.
- Make parent contacts early with follow-up on routine basis if student is not performing.
- Conduct home visits for first time parents and parents who move into the school area.
- Establish “tutor after school” programs.
- Recognize that you are a public service provider and need to have flexible hours.
- Recognize the diversity of your school population; provide workshops to help increase understanding of diversity among our families for faculty and staff.
- Extend personal invitation for parents to attend school functions.
- Start and finish conversations with positive notes with parents.
- Solicit parent input on their child’s strength(s) and request information parents can provide to enhance the child’s performance.
- Collaborate with parents on the child’s academic performance.
- Use a variety of sources to communicate and compliment student performance.
- Provide parents with information on resources available to enhance student achievement.
- Provide students and parents with clear expectations of assignments, classroom rules, and suggested materials.
- List consequences and rewards for following classroom rules.
- Reach out to parents and form a team working “for” the child.
- Get to know strengths of parents to give advice on how the parent can best help their child at home and at school.
- Establish and maintain positive parent relations and utilize services of schools, social workers and/or parent liaisons.

COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS INVOLVEMENT

- Forge greater collaboration around children and students issues.
- Implement child watch initiatives
- Implement Adopt-A-School programs.
- Establish mentor bureau
- Develop work-site programs for adult literacy.
- Recognize and reward local schools for achievements.
- Donate goods, services, and books to schools in name of employees of the month.
- Bring together all government agencies to aid parents on all research of parenting skills (books, non-profits, faith community)
- Hold “Meet the Principal” nights at local churches, parks and health centers.
- Offer talent and experience to schools and classrooms
- Display signs, publications about impact of education and parent involvement.
- Serve as role models for establishing parent-friendly, flexible workplace policies to enable parents to attend parent-teacher conferences.
- Offer work-site, church-site, community-site to conduct parent-teacher conferences.
- Sponsor transportation for parents to enable parent-teacher conferences at school.
- Provide mini-grants to schools to support special projects for improving learning.
- Make a point to provide childcare on school meeting and activity nights and feed them, “they will come.”

E. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Parent involvement in South Carolina has been influenced greatly through early childhood education and parent/family literacy initiatives. Best practices are being implemented across those initiatives and parent involvement and momentum for it has become an intrinsic component of the public education system.

There does not appear to be any accountability mechanism in place to ensure parent involvement opportunities or to define expectations for parent involvement (state and local levels) at every level of responsibility and every grade level.

Parent involvement is not viewed as a process or component of the education system which the research suggests must be the case if systemic parent involvement for all grade levels is to occur.

There is no structured method to enable, support and sustain parent involvement at all levels of responsibility.

The barriers and challenges cited in the research and expressed by educators can be overcome through a variety of proven approaches identified in the research.

The only parent involvement training available is for School Improvement Councils and there is no method in place for assessing competencies in parent involvement.

Parent Involvement **T**ASK **F**ORCE

RECOMMENDATIONS

The PITF believes the recommendations and specific actions offered in this report constitute a framework to influence and support increased parent involvement. The framework builds on some existing initiatives and embodies a support system to increase parental involvement throughout the state.

Viewing parent involvement holistically, the PITF is recommending specific actions to close the gaps in practice. The specific actions are presented within five broad recommendations:

- 1.0 Establish a Formal Framework to Encourage Increased Parent Involvement Statewide;
- 2.0 Require Parent Involvement Training for all School Staff;
- 3.0 Emphasize Parental Responsibilities for their Children's Success in School, preK through Grade 12;
- 4.0 Allow Increased Opportunities and Flexibility for Parent-Teacher Contacts; and
- 5.0 Monitor and Evaluate Parent Involvement Efforts.

Recommendation 1.0

Establish a formal framework to encourage increased parent involvement.

STATE LEVEL ACTIONS

- 1.1. The Governor should require state agencies (and their governing boards) that serve families and children to collaborate and establish networks with schools that the children they serve attend.
- 1.2. The State Board of Education (SBE) should:
 - a. require school and district long-range improvement plans to include stated goals and objectives for parent involvement and methods for local data collection to support statewide evaluation of parent involvement efforts; and
 - b. recognize those districts and schools where parent involvement significantly increases beyond stated goals and objectives, as determined by the state evaluation defined in Recommendation Five.
- 1.3. The State Superintendent of Education should:
 - a. enroll the SDE as state member of national organizations which promote proven parent involvement frameworks, models and practices and provide related services to state and local members, such as the National Network of Partnership Schools, and promote and encourage local school districts to join as local members;
 - b. through state leadership, promote parent involvement as a priority for all levels from pre-K through grade 12, with particular emphasis at the middle and high school levels where parent involvement is currently least visible, and designate an SDE staff position whose specific role is to coordinate statewide initiatives to support school and district parent involvement;
 - c. develop a process for collecting and sharing parent involvement best practices with schools and districts, including practices that are specific to grade levels; and other related elements which support parent involvement, such as the National PTA standards;
 - d. disseminate best practices in various forms (print, video, audio, and workshops, etc.) to districts and schools;
 - e. monitor and evaluate parent involvement statewide and report results (See Recommendation Five); and
 - f. identify, recommend on and implement ways to coordinate and integrate programs and funding for maximum benefit to enhance parent involvement.

Recommendation 1.0 (continued)

LOCAL LEVEL ACTIONS

1.4. The School Board of Trustees should:

- a. ensure that the district and schools join national organizations which promote various proven parent involvement frameworks and models and provide services to districts and schools, such as the National Network of Partnership Schools and where possible, incorporate those practices into existing policies and efforts; and
- b. provide incentives and formal recognition for schools that significantly improve/increase parent involvement, as determined by the results of the state evaluation defined in Recommendation Five.

1.5. The District Superintendent and School Principal should:

- a. assure that each school's School Improvement Council (SIC) and other school decision-making groups are functioning in accordance with state requirements and in the best interest of an inclusive system; and
- b. support implementation of Action Team approaches and other models that support SICs and facilitate greater decision-making input and collaboration among parents, the community and faculty in the school.

1.6 The District Superintendent should:

- a. provide staff to serve as parent liaison for the district who will coordinate parent involvement initiatives and coordinate community collaboration and/or agency networking to support parents and families; and
- b. require each school to designate a faculty contact for parent involvement efforts who will work collaboratively with the district coordinator and network with other school faculty contacts.

Recommendation 2.0

Require parent involvement training for all school staff.

STATE LEVEL ACTIONS

2.1. The State Board of Education should:

- a. require all certified persons employed by South Carolina school districts and special schools to complete formal training in parent involvement through pre- and in-service teacher preparation programs, programs for re-certification of veteran teachers and administrators, staff development at the school district level, or through state and local academies, apprenticeships, institutes;
- b. require this training for teacher and administrator certification;
- c. require in-services with parent involvement training for non-certified staff; and
- d. adopt criteria for the non-certified staff in-service parent involvement training program.

2.2. The State Superintendent of Education should:

- a. work with higher education Institutions to design required parent involvement course(s), for teacher education and training programs, which shall address racial/ethnic and socio-economic diversity, maintenance of a parent-friendly school setting, awareness of community resources that strengthen families and assist students to succeed, and other topics appropriate for fostering

partnerships between parent and teacher.

- b. develop and implement a model in-service parent involvement training program for non-certified staff based on criteria developed with input from parent coordinators and parents, and approved by the SBE;
- c. provide parent involvement staff development training for district trainers;
- d. provide other technical assistance relating to parent involvement training to districts and schools;
- e. advise schools and districts on current effective methods, strategies and practices used in other states for providing parent involvement training for faculty and staff; and
- f. promote collaboration between school districts and schools that enhance and support home and school activities.

Recommendation 2.0 (continued)

LOCAL LEVEL ACTIONS

- 2.3. The School Board of Trustees should:
- a. provide parent involvement orientation and training with an emphasis on unique school and district needs for all faculty and staff, at the beginning of the 2001-2002 school year and, thereafter, on an ongoing basis in three-year cycles.

Recommendation 3.0

Emphasize parental responsibilities for their children's success in school, preK-grade 12

STATE LEVEL ACTIONS

- 3.1. The Education Oversight Committee (EOC) should promote the importance of parent involvement through the public awareness campaign required by the EAA, and should include the following:
- a. advice for parents on how to help their children be successful in school and the importance of nurturing their children's skills and abilities;
 - b. requests to employers, state agencies, entities, community groups, non-profits, and faith communities that work with children and families to distribute and display parent advice and other pertinent parent information;
 - c. promotion of the benefits of increased productivity, loyalty and sense of community which result from parent-friendly work place policies;
 - d. Encourage employers to:
 - Adopt parent-friendly workplace policies
 - offer the workplace for parent-teacher conferences
 - provide recognition awards to parent employees completing diploma and GED programs
 - donate services and goods to schools in the name of both the business and their employees of the month; and
- a. recognize businesses and employers where parent-friendly policies have been adopted; and
- b. recognize agencies and faith communities that have supported and increased parent involvement in their children's education.
- 3.2. The Education Oversight Committee and the State Superintendent of Education should develop and publish jointly the following informational materials for distribution to all parents in the state whose children attend public schools and to all teachers for their use in the classroom and with parents:
- a uniform, parent-friendly, bilingual handbook and video explaining the grade-level content standards, and providing advice on how parents can help their children achieve the standards and the relationship of the standards to the PACT-Palmetto Achievement Challenge Tests.
 - printed information about the standards and advice relative to parent involvement in their children's education for visible display and use in every public school K-12 classroom.

Recommendation 3.0 (continued)

- 3.3. The EOC or State Superintendent of Education should disseminate the bibliography in this PITF report to all districts and schools.

LOCAL LEVEL ACTIONS

- 3.4. The School Board of Trustees should:
- a. establish policies and support actions to increase parent involvement which bring together the teacher, the parent and the student to discuss the academic progress of the student;
 - b. adopt policies requiring the district and schools to incorporate proven effective practices that enable parents to become more involved in the education of their children;
 - c. identify and promote availability of community resources for schools that strengthen families and support student success; and
 - d. offer parent education, parenting skills, and child development information in comprehensive health courses at middle and high school grades to promote and influence good parenting, particularly, for students who are young parents.
- 3.5. The District Superintendent and District Administrators should:
- a. distribute and display information on parental responsibilities for a child's academic success in various places where parents are likely to be.

- 3.6. The School Principals should:

- a. designate space within the school building specifically for parents with a lending library.

Recommendation 4.0

Allow increased opportunity and flexibility for parent-teacher contacts.

STATE LEVEL ACTIONS

- 4.1 The General Assembly should:
- a. add 2 teacher contract days, with provision requiring use of these added days for parent-teacher conferences for students without reference to student's ability or risk factor, to allow additional opportunity for parent-teacher conferences for all students;
 - b. require, rather than make optional, the 2 days currently authorized in statute for parent-teacher conferences for at-risk students; and
 - c. provide tax incentives to encourage employers to: (1) provide parent employee release time for parent/teacher conferences or attendance at their children's academic-related events without loss of pay, and (2) work with local school officials and workplace parent employees to develop workplace policies which enable parents to improve their literacy, assist their children with academics, and become more involved in their child's education.
- 4.2 The District Superintendent should:
- a. In cases where transportation to the school site is a problem for parents, require school principals to accommodate scheduling of parent-teacher conferences at sites other than school; and at alternative times if traditional school hours present a hardship to parents.

Recommendation 5.0

Monitor and evaluate parent involvement efforts.

STATE LEVEL ACTION

5.1 The State Superintendent of Education should monitor and conduct annual evaluations of parent involvement programs and related components and practices as follows:

- a. design a statewide system to support the evaluation to include methods for assessing the effectiveness of parent involvement in increasing student achievement, and identify best practices;
- b. share evaluation findings and a response to the findings with schools, districts, state and local agencies, higher education institutions for use in teacher preparation programs and appropriate other state agencies and entities; and
- c. provide an annual report of the evaluation findings and implications to the General Assembly, State Board of Education, and Education Oversight Committee. [This recommended action aligns with the evaluation action presented under major heading Recommendation One.]

5.2 The Education Oversight Committee (EOC) should include parent involvement information

on the *School Report Card*, as follows:

- a. for purpose of information, report the capacity that parents are actively involved in their children's education at home and at school; and
- b. develop a method for collecting the related school-level data for the report card.

5.3 Further, the EOC should:

- a. Survey parents annually to determine if state and local efforts are effective in increasing parent involvement with attention to the following:
 - 1) the extent that their participation and involvement in their children's education (at home, at school or both) is a result of school district and school efforts, the public awareness campaign, and/or other local and state efforts;

Recommendation 5.0 (continued)

- 2) ask parents to identify the opportunities and strategies that have been most effective in involving them in their children's education;
- 3) include open-ended queries inviting parent comments; and
- b. develop the survey instrument with input from state & local parent program coordinators.

LOCAL LEVEL ACTIONS

- 5.4 The School Board of Trustees should:
- a. require an annual briefing on district/school parent involvement programs including findings from state and local evaluations on the success of the district and schools' efforts;
 - b. adopt policies that emphasize the importance of parent involvement and outline clearly-defined expectations for the schools in the district; and
 - c. include parent involvement expectations as part of the superintendent's evaluation.

- 5.5 The District Superintendent should:
- a. include parent involvement expectations as part of each principal's evaluation; and
 - b. include information about parent involvement opportunities and participation in the district's annual report.
- 5.6 The School Principal should:
- a. include parent involvement expectations as part of each teacher's evaluation; and
 - b. include information about parent involvement opportunities and participation in the school's annual report.

APPENDIX A

PARENT INVOLVEMENT TASK FORCE

RICK BURKHART

(Parent/Congressional District 1)

Parent of two children adopted from Russia ages 12 and 7. High School history teacher for ten years and very active in community service with high school students. Spouse is an elementary school volunteer during the school year and they both are members of the PTSA. "We spend most school nights with our children working on English, homework, and reading."

To me, Accountability means... *"that the schools are making a sincere effort with whatever resources they have to train the future of our county to the best of their ability. This means demonstrating leadership from within as well as expecting support from without. Education should not be a haven for those who are not committed or are content deficient."*

ROSEMARY P. CHOICE

(Social Service/Congressional District 2)

Parent of three children ages 15, 11, and 5. Involved in the PTAs. Serves as a parent volunteer at each child's school. Conducts parenting workshops at her child's Middle School. Chairs a Health and Education Collaborative Committee, a Healthy Communities' initiative in her county and Department of Social Services Interagency Team.

To me, Accountability means... *"being responsible or answerable for ones' action. This in my opinion, isn't limited to children, parents, teachers or administrative staff. The entire community i.e. churches, business, and government must all take on some responsibility in educating students."*

VERGIL A. DEAS

(Juvenile Justice/Congressional District 1)

Though not a parent, serves as a mentor at Alston Middle School and Flowertown Elementary School.

To me, Accountability means... *"you have an active role in determining your child's educational destiny. You will work hand in hand with teachers, administrators and children to help better their education."*

MELVIN DEASE

(Parent /Congressional District 5)

Parent of three children ages: 2, 8 and 6. Assist with the development of reading and math skills, and assist teachers in elementary and primary schools. Volunteer reading to classes, and chaperone for on and off campus activities.

To me, Accountability means... *"We are responsible for our children's education. No longer can we sit back and say that "they" aren't teaching anything in the schools. We must become more proactive and less reactive. We must get everyone actively involved in order to minimize illiteracy, drop outs and other non-productive traits."*

MARILYN Y. DOUCET

(Social Service/Congressional District 6)

Parent of one daughter age 8. Currently serves on the Columbia Urban League's Stop the Violence Youth Advisory Board. Employed as a Parent Liaison with W.A. Perry Middle School. Attends Open House, parent/teacher conferences, PTO's and drop in visits in the classroom. "I assist her with home work, we read daily, and we visit the public library. We attend church and educational community events. We are also involved in service learning activities."

To me, Accountability means... *"that everyone is responsible for our children's education, from the State Department to parents and the community. Everyone has access to the standards and knows and understands the standards. Providing everyone with resources needed to bring them up to their level. Providing parents with information and workshops on the PACT test."*

CHARLES DUNLAP

(Parent /Congressional District 2)

JUDY FAIR

(Social Service/Congressional District 6)

Although not a parent every school year allows her to "parent" some of the 27,000 students in her school district as a Certified School Social Work Specialist. She serves on several schools SAT's (Student Assistant Teams) and conducts Parent Workshops. Member on Board of Directors of: The SC Education Association (SCEA), The SC Chapter of National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and SC Association of School Social Workers and a member of the Nominating Committee of School Social Workers Association of America (SSWAA). Teaches undergraduate social work courses and conflict resolution courses. Serves as a workshop presenter for National Social Work Organizations.

To me, Accountability means... *"collaboration among parents, children and schools to build a partnership that enhances academic achievement, character development and positive social development."*

JOSIE G. GASTON

(Social Services/Congressional District 5)

Parent of three sons who are college graduates and two grandchildren ages 16 and 7. Involved in children's education in a variety of ways – Past Chairperson of SC School Board Association, served on the Board for six years; Member of School District Strategic Planning Committee; Volunteer for reading to elementary school students; and Tutor children sponsored by the church.

To me, Accountability means... *“being held responsible for the overall “achievement of children” – That we all have a piece of the pie – Parent, Teachers, Community, etc. Being able to do what is expected, that is guarantee to taxpayers and others. Students are performing at top “level” - money and time is well spent. Summarizing it all – means “doing what’s expected”*

BETTY L. GREGORY

(Parent/Congressional District 6)

Parent of three children, ages 16, 22 and 25, and currently active in her children's education. Serves on AC Flora High School's School Improvement Council, Foundation Board, and Healthy Schools Task Force. Serves on Richland District One Blue Ribbon Committee (Vice Chairperson); and serves as Parent Liaison for Governmental Relations Program. SICA Board Member. Volunteers as a Lunch Partner for Crayton Middle School. Serves as Project Organizer for “Learning the Ropes” Orientation Program, a joint project between Crayton School and St. Martins-in-the-Fields Episcopal Church. Recipient of SCSBA Champion for Public Education Award; United Way of the Midlands School Service Award; and the SC State Board of Education Volunteer of Year Award.

To me, Accountability means... *“The responsibility of truly educating and promoting the well being of SC’s children belongs to all of us. It means parents, schools and community being held to that commitment and the state providing the necessary personnel/resources for our goals to be met. Example: Policy to require summer school needs sufficient funding for districts to implement.*

ROBERTA HAMBY

(Parent/Congressional District 3)

Parent of two daughters, ages 10 and 9, and volunteer at children's school. “I sit down every afternoon (including Fridays) for at least two hours of homework, per night, per children. I volunteer one day per week at the Middle school, and when needed at the primary school. I chaperon all field trips.”

To me, Accountability means... *“ one’s responsibility to a specific job or task. If you take on any responsibility then you have to be accountable for their happenings, whether good or bad. Parenting is a responsibility that most people plan and prepare for. Teaching is a responsibility that is planned for also. We are all accountable for education of our children.”*

KATHARINE “KAPPY” HUBBARD

(Parent/Congressional District 2)

Parent of three children ages 16,15,and 12. Parent involvement activities currently include SIC and Academic Excellence Committee at Crayton Middle School and volunteer at Heathwood Hall Episcopal School. Chairs the Education Outreach Committee (K-12) for USC’s Bicentennial Commission, and the Board of Directors for the Alliance for SC’s Children. “I am a deacon at Eastminster Presbyterian Church where I teach Sunday school and am a member of the Eastminster Day School Council.”

To me, Accountability means... “*It must somehow begin with parents assuming responsibility for their children and children growing into responsible adulthood.*”

BETH KITCH

(Parent/Congressional District 1)

Parent of three children ages 13, 11 and 7, and actively involved in children's education in a variety of ways. Attends public school board meetings. Serves as parent liaison in child's middle school. SIC member for both elementary and middle schools. Helps teachers, administrators, and students in both schools. Assists her children in every possible way to reach their goals. “My focus is being involved at school and at home. I supplement in areas if I see weakness.”

To me, Accountability means... “*Holding every community member, child, parent, teacher, and administrator responsible for making sure all resources are available and efforts are being made to reach every child in every community. Without a good public education system our community/society collapses!*”

RAINEY KNIGHT

(Educator/Congressional District 5)

Parent of one son age 16 and actively involved in children's education. Serves as homework assistance, member of Academic Booster Club and child's soccer team mom.

To me, Accountability means... “*being responsible for that which you are charged.*”

WILLIAM LYBRAND, JR.

(Juvenile Justice/Congressional District 4)

Parent of three children ages 16,15 and 7. Serves as a member of the Spartanburg High School Band Booster, and a DARE officer and School Resource for five years. Majored in physical Education Criminal Justice in college. “I am married to a teacher of 16 years. My wife and I are heavily involved in our children education and life as a whole. My motto is always “do the right thing.”

To me, Accountability means... “*shared responsibility a joint venture student, home, teacher school and staff as well as the state and district.*”

RENFRO MANNING

(Educator/Congressional District 5)

Parent of adult children.

To me, Accountability means... *“The goal continues to be holding schools, individual classrooms and the school districts responsible to see that all children are successful learners. Of course, we have reemphasized that a necessary “tool” for success is parent involvement. This aspect is so critical we need to put “teeth” into our efforts to be certain this happens.”*

EDWARD MARSHALL

(Social Services/Congressional District 4)

Parent of two children, ages 2 years and 5 months. Heavily involved in community affairs, political issues and pre-school children's education. Working on a Master's Degree in Education and have been in charge of the youth exchange program for his Rotary Club. “We are involved with our pre-school children. We read voraciously, play together, and limit TV (to almost nothing). We spend lots of time in the home of our caregiver.”

To me, Accountability means... *“Total involvement by parents in each of their child's lives – this “accountability” goes beyond the academic arena and starts with the health and safety of all children in their neighborhood or community.”*

MATHEW MCCANTS

(Parent/Congressional District 6)

Parent of two children ages 7 and 5, and is actively involved in both children's homework assignments, etc. A minister for the local community church and also serves as President for Webber School PTA. Member of the School Improvement Council. Serves as the local Sheriff Deputy in the community.

To me, Accountability means...
No comment made.

SHARON MCELVEEN

(Parent/Congressional District 2)

Parent of two children ages 8 and 7, and is involved in children's education in a variety of ways.

Volunteers tutoring two days a week in the 1st grade classroom, and participates in various school fund raising events. A member of the School

To me, Accountability means... *"responsibility in all aspects of a child's education. The parent needs to ensure a healthy school ready child. The school is responsible to provide standards for each grade level, "support" from the administrators, , teachers, counselors, and principal. The community (government, corporations, churches and neighborhoods) is responsible to support and promote academic excellence for each child."*

Improvement Council. A member of the Junior League of Columbia in which their main focus is school readiness. Served as church Sunday school teacher. Currently developing a junior volunteer training program through the Junior League of Columbia. " I have just begun my family's journey through the public school system. The homework, the schoolwork, and the requirements all seem to be lacking clear expectations. The communication can be extremely vague. Many answers as for as testing, resources, and expectation must be dug out of a mountain of paperwork. This has been a long journey with a sharp learning curve."

MAX MELTON, JR.

(Juvenile Justice/Congressional District 6)

Parent of two children ages 17 and 12. Served as past President of the Elementary school PTO and

Past Treasurer of Middle school PTO. Volunteers time in tutoring elementary students in reading during lunch hour. Serves as President of Gifted and Talented Support Group and also a member of Charter School Committee.

To me, Accountability means... *"Parents have a responsibility to encourage learning. They can do this in a number of ways which may include talking to children regarding school activities, providing an environment conducive to learning at home, and participation in school activities..."*

Activities at home involve "daily

vocabulary builder (I list a word and it's definition on the refrigerator – children add the word and definition to master list on computer). Daily helping with homework for 12 year old. Daily checking of homework for 17 year old. Attendance at activities in which children are involved (plays, sports, etc.)"

DIANNE L. MIZZELL

(Educator/Congressional District 3)

Parent of one son age 12 and involved in a variety of child's education activities. Attend assemblies, performances, sports events, and recognition and award ceremonies; Assist teachers on field trips; Assist school and church programs; and help with homework. Serves as a PTO member for child's school.

To me, Accountability means..." *a partnership between the school and family. I believe it includes the 6 types of involvement that Dr. Epstein explains in her book: 1. Parenting; 2. Communicating; 3. Volunteering; 4. Learning at Home; 5. Decision Making; 6. Collaborating With the Community."*

TONYA MARSH MOTON

(Parent/Congressional District 3)

Parent of one seven year old child. Involved in a sorority that sponsors a youth group. Serves as a member of the PTO, Head Start Association, and as a Parent Volunteer. Assists with a mentoring program. Provides assistance to parents by transporting them to various places. Enrolled in educational classes, takes weekly trips to the library. Spend time together doing educational computer games together. "We have donated books to our son's class and been active in all fund raising projects held by the school."

To me, Accountability means... *"parents, students, educators, and administrators working together for the success. Each of the parties has a very important role in this to play. Teachers should be oriented on how to interact professionally with parents in every situation and negativism should be discouraged. Outreach programs need to be increased. Every parent should be asked to take a part regardless of education or economic background. Schools must become more parent-friendly! Teachers and parents need to realize they play a direct role in the success of the child. Make homework assignments such that the parents can understand and assist the child. INVOLVE PARENTS!"*

WENDELL PRICE

(Juvenile Justice/Congressional District 2)

Parent of two children, a middle schooler and a kindgartener. His career of 20 years has been spent working in children and family services. Wendell holds a Master of Science degree in Individual and Family Development. He enjoys family activities such as family games, vacations, outdoor activities and traveling.

To me, Accountability means... *"each stakeholder fulfills their role as parent, community, and business partner while working toward the goal of providing a quality education for each child attending South Carolina's public school system"*

GEORGE ROGERS

(Educator/Congressional District 3)

Parent of two adult children ages 28 and 24. Serves as principal of Kennedy Middle School in Aiken, SC. In the past he has served as principal and Federal Program Coordinator for Greenwood and Marlboro counties.

To me, Accountability means... *"shared responsibility for the education of a child. Shared by the school, home and student with each accountable."*

RUTH SCHOONOVER

(Parent/Congressional District 4)

Parent of two boys, ages 13 and 15, and actively involved in children's education (school visits and open communication), son's youth soccer organization, and church youth committee. Certified as School Social Work Specialist. Serves as Scout Leader, PTO officer and member, and is involved in child abuse prevention and awareness for county.

To me, Accountability means... *"making everyone responsible for a child's education – not just the school and teachers, but parents, community, church, etc."*

TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIP cont.

LIBBY STEELMAN

(Parent/Congressional District 4)

Parent of four children ages 20,17, 15 and 10, and is involved in children's education in a variety of ways. Intermediate School – Library Volunteer, Substitute Teacher; and High School – serves on At Risk Committee and is a Mentor. Serves on Superintendent's Community Advisory Council and is Girl Scout Leader in the community. Served as past PTA President for two years in Middle School. "I constantly read and oversee that my children are engaged in educational activities instead of watching television or playing video games; encourage educational games with the family, including games that involve raising self-esteem; encourage practice of music lessons; monitor circle of friends; provide recreational activities to promote physical well being and encourage my children's friends to join us at home."

To me, Accountability means... *"having active ownership in every aspect of your child's life. The buck stops here – whether it is accolades or reform school – parents have to be a part of and accept partial responsibility for their children whether it be academics or social behavior."*

SALLIE B. STEPHENS

(Educator/Congressional District 6)

Parent of two adult sons college graduates. Served on many state, district, and local committees, a member of the SC Education Association Board of Directors, and Chairperson of the math Department of Walterboro High School. "We started reading to the children at a very early age. We help our sons to develop good study habits. They attended gifted summer schools from grades 5 through 10. I participated in all school activities where the children were involved."

To me, Accountability means... *"being responsible and ensuring that parents, students, schools, and communities are involved in all endeavors which promote successful student achievement."*

REGINA E. WILLIAMS

(Educator/Congressional District 2)

Parent of one three years old daughter. Serves on District and State Textbook Adoption Teams, Grade Level Chairperson, ADEPT Mentor and Evaluator and child's Preschool PTA. Teaches drama for the Fairfield County Artworks Program. Works as a Homebound Instructor. "With my child, I started reading to her at six weeks conception. At 6 months old my child could hold a book and recognized that it was upside down. I know the benefits of parent involvement."

To me, Accountability means... *"a shared responsibility for the education of my child. Sharing means holding the school and home equally responsible for the child's education."*

CECELIA (Cece) WRIGHT

(Educator/Congressional District 4)

Parent of a daughter, 19 in college and a son, 16 a Junior in High School. Member of school PTO.

Serves on the School Safety Committee, and Grade Level Chairman. ADEPT mentor and evaluator. "At home, I monitor (or try to) homework completion and help plan schedules for long term projects. I nag a lot! I religiously attend Back to School night both semesters and meet with teachers as the need arises. Despite being an educator, I am sometimes unsure of my role as a parent in the school system."

To me, Accountability means... *"an ever-widening circle. Many people regard it as something between teacher/child (i.e. test scores) but it is so much more complex. The focus of education must include the family, as our schools are natural extensions of the family. The circle must also encompass the community and its diverse needs and stretch out farther to communities beyond those in which we personally live. In our state, which has such sharp division between the haves and have -nots, we must make a commitment to, and be accountable for, the education of children across our state."*

ROBERT ZUERCHER

(Parent/Congressional District 1)

Parent of four children ages 23, 18, 11, and 9. Serves on Myrtle Beach Advisory Board, Myrtle Beach Intermediate SIC and Myrtle Beach Middle School SIC, and the District Superintendent's Advisory

To me, Accountability means... *"supporting the academic, social, and emotional development of the student (child). The accountability is a shared responsibility...shared between parent, schools and Community."*

Cabinet, Strategic Planning, and Reconnecting Communities and Schools. Monitors his children's homework activities and provides assistance as required. Additional challenge work (advanced work) is given at home. A working father, employed by an outside corporation, involved in public education. My children have expressed to me many times that the most important thing for them has been when I join them for lunch and spend a few minutes in their classroom."

PARENT INVOLVEMENT TASK FORCE - WORK PLAN AND TIMELINE

[1999]

DATE	FEB 17	MARCH 17	APRIL 21	MAY 19	JUNE 17	JULY 21	AUG 18	SEPT 22	OCT 7 - 13	OCT 15
GROUP:	FULL TF	Grade Level Comm Meet Pre-K, Elem Middle, High	FULL TF Comm Meet	Grade Level Comm Meet Pre-K, Elem Middle, High	EOC SUBC; TF NAT'L LDR GUESTS Special Session 9:30-10:30 am NOON LUNCHEON AFT'noon w/TF	Gr Level&Gr Comm Meet Pre-K, Elem Middle, High	FULL TF Prelim REC Pre-K, Elem Middle, High	FULL TF draft REC	FULL TF Final REC & Rev Draft Rpt	FINAL TF DUE TO
TIME:	5:30-8:30 pm	1-4 p.m.	9:30 a.m.- 1:30 p.m.	9:30 a.m.- 2:30 p.m.		9:30 a.m.- 2:30 p.m.	9:30 a.m.- 3:30 p.m.	9:30 a.m.- 3:30 p.m.	9:30 a.m.- 3:30 p.m.	
LOCATION/SITE:	Columbia Town House	Columbia Holiday Inn-Dtown	Columbia Holiday Inn-Dtown	Columbia Holiday Inn-Dtown	Columbia-Sheraton 120/Bush River	Columbia 221 Blatt Bldg	Columbia 221 Blatt Bldg	Columbia 221 Blatt Bldg.	Columbia 221 Blatt Bldg.	
CONVENER:	PI Sub Chair J Bennett	J Bennett T Bockus	T Bockus	L Thompson T Bockus	L Thompson EOC Chair	L Thompson T Bockus	T Bockus L Thompson	T Bockus	T Bockus	
OTHR PARTICP:	Special Presenter EOC Staff Facilitator	Facilitator	EOC Staff SDE Staff Presentations	SDE, Dist Pgrms; USC Study Presentations	J. Epstein Distinguished Gsta	Facilitator	Facilitator	-----	-----	
OUTCOME:	Structure of Work Ahead; Problem Analysis	Identification (1) best practices (2) challenges, i.e. barriers	Parent Understand- ing of Changes in Public Education System	Learn about SC Policy, Programs & Practice	Learn from Nat'l Leader(s) Parent Involvmnt Concepts, Nuts & Bolts	Framework for TF REC	Draft REC	Refine REC	Final REC Consensus Review Draft Rpt	
OBJECTIVE:		Examine Parent Involvmnt in relation to Gr Level Needs	Build Home-School Relations and Effective Communications	Overview of SC Policy, Programs; Discuss Alignment, Gaps (SC Best practices According to Research)	Address and Discuss: Effective Parent Involvement and Impact on Academic Achievement	Final Gr Lev Discussion: Consensus I.D. of policy Implications; Further research findings; TF Consensus Format	Draft TF REC Content based on grp discuss; summary of research findings to date, in relation to SC, etc. TF Consensus Draft Rpt	Refinement	Final REC Consensus; Input, Rpt	
PROCESS	•Welcome/Intro; Sub Chair and Mbrs EOC Staff	•Review Research	•Review (1) Gr Level Research	•Review Matrix Identify alignment, -----	<u>Nat'l Leader Epstein</u> AM wk w/TF & Oth -----		Action: Consensus -----	Action: Review, Input -----	Action: Final Review -----	

TASK FORCE WORK PLAN, continued

DATE	FEB 17	MARCH 17	APRIL 21	MAY 19	JUNE 17	JULY 21	AUG 18	SEPT 22	OCT 7 - 13	OCT 15
PROCESS Cont'd.	Facilitator Special Guest TF Mbrs	•Apply best practices to grade level needs	(2) School Report Card	•Addl review of research; •translate gaps to policy Implications	PM Wk w/ TF only	Implications Rpt Format		Proposed Rpt Format & REC	Final Input Consensus	Final 1 Rpt to EOC
	• Review TF Plan Describe, clarify Comm org, timeline	•Gr Level Comm Discussion Needs, Practice	EOC Involvement In Development; Status							
	•TF Grp Discuss: Critical Issues	• Break-out Gr level Comms; Re-convene TF	Q & A Session	•After Presenters Break-out Gr Levels Record; and Discuss @ Next Mtg	FULL TF Break-out Grp Reconvene	FULL TF & Break-Out Reconvene				
	• Break-out group particular org; and Re-convene TF & Group recorder to Report discussion	Group recorder to report on discussion								
	•Summarize (themes, topics)	•Summarize (themes, topics)		•Summarize TF (discussion)			•Summarize organize for TF report	Refine/Finalize TF Recommend. & Rpt		
	•Appoint TF Comms for next mtg						Draft TF Recommend.	Establish Core TF Team for Final Review	Final Mail- out for TF Approval	
								Establish TF Spokespersons For subcommittee & EOC presentation		

SOUTH CAROLINA PROGRAMS

General Description

The following program descriptions relate to the programs referenced on the matrix in EXHIBIT C-II.

Act 135 Parenting/Family Literacy

South Carolina has a comprehensive parent education and family literacy system that enables school districts to design their own mix of child- and family-focused support services. With the passage of the Early Childhood Development and Academic Assistance Act of 1993, all school districts are to develop and implement parenting/family literacy initiatives to support parents in their role as principal teachers of their preschool children. Technical assistance and training is conducted and coordinated by the Office of Early Childhood Education.

Even Start Family Literacy

Even Start Family Literacy is a federally-funded program designed to help break the cycle of poverty and illiteracy by improving the educational opportunities of low-income families. Even Start projects provide a holistic program to families through the integration of early childhood education, adult literacy, adult basic education or English as a second language (ESL), and parenting education into a unified family literacy program. Currently, 15 school districts operate Even Start projects.

Adult Education

Adult Education seeks to improve the literacy levels of adults in South Carolina in the following ways: 1) helping undereducated adults (most of whom are parents) attain a High School Diploma or GED, 2) providing adults with the skills needed to gain employment or to retain employment or advance in their employment, and 3) increase the educational levels of parents and of healthy interaction between parents and their children through Family Literacy Programs.

Volunteerism/Community Involvement

The School Volunteer Program is designed to create more effective partnerships among the schools, parents, community and business. This is done through workshops, technical assistance and the annual State Board of Education Volunteer Awards Program.

Healthy Schools

South Carolina Healthy Schools is an initiative that focuses on improving the culture and climate of schools, and ultimately, the academic achievement of children and adolescents by promoting the development of positive assets and healthful behaviors. Healthy Schools is a broad, holistic approach that involves parents, schools and communities working together to promote a healthy, safe and drug-free environment, the improvement of health and physical education, social and emotional health, health services, nutrition services, and staff wellness. South Carolina Healthy Schools is a collaborative between the State Department of Education and the Department of

Health and Environmental Control, and is funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Division of Adolescent and School Health.

AmeriCorps Program

The AmeriCorps Program funds grants that have components dealing with parent involvement in the children's academic learning experiences, how children and parents can learn together, etc. Many grants deal with parents of low socioeconomic status who do not have the skills needed to help their children.

Service Learning

Since 1992, South Carolina has been designated as a Leader State by the Corporation for National Service to implement service learning as a teaching method to reinforce the academic skills taught in the classroom. We have the challenge of developing materials that will advance the state and national service learning field. Funds are distributed on a competitive basis statewide.

Linking Intergenerational Networks in Communities (LINC)

LINC, funded by a private foundation, is an intergenerational statewide project, which brings youth and older adults together to form relationships while meeting local needs through service to the community. The parents and grandparents participate in local LINC projects through special events, celebrations, and often volunteer with their students during summer activities. Parents often meet the mentors of the LINC youth and form family friendships. The four state partners are the State Department of Education, the United Way of South Carolina, the Department of Health and Human Services Office on Aging, and Clemson University. There are seven LINC communities throughout South Carolina.

Title I

Title I requires at least 1% of the district's allocation to be used for parent involvement, provided the district allocation is at least \$500,000. The law requires each school and district to develop written strategies as to how they will meet the needs of parents; therefore, the programs provided are unique to the communities. Many of the districts are providing varied parent trainings, some have parent involvement facilitators in the schools, some offer family literacy, a few fund parent centers, and one has a van that travels throughout the rural areas providing services to parents and their children. Most of the districts have found the Take-Home Computer program to be the best means of involving parents in their child's education. Title I law also includes the requirement for parent-school compacts.

Extended-Day/After-School Programs

The after-school child program operates at 89 sites. Funding is through a grant from the Department of Health and Human Services. Childcare services are provided to parents who are working full-time or who are either full-time students or in another educational program and who meet certain income guidelines. The program currently serves more than 2,200 parents and more than 3,200 students.

McKinney Homeless Assistance Program

Funded through provisions of the federal McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, the SC Department of Education is charged with ensuring "that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same, free, public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youth."

Character Education

In South Carolina, increasing numbers of schools, districts and communities are coming together to identify and emphasize the character traits they want their children to develop and practice. The traits form the common ground, the foundation, and the focus for each individualized character education program across the state. Character education in South Carolina is about supporting community and home instruction, not replacing it. Parents are the first and foremost teachers of right and wrong.

Young African American Males Action Team (YAAMAT)

The YAAMAT program encourages active parental involvement in the schools. The program's focus has been with teachers, community and church leaders who then share information and develop programs for children with assistance from parents.

South Carolina Literacy Resource Center

The South Carolina Literacy Resource Center coordinates staff development and training for local parenting and family literacy programs. Training programs provided include: Parents As Teachers, the Parent-Child Home Program, Survival Skills for Women, and the Rural Initiative/Family Literacy Projects.

GED Testing Program

The Tests of General Educational Development (GED) are administered in South Carolina by the State Department of Education. The program is designed to provide an alternative way to obtain a high school credential for people who have dropped out of high school and have not completed the requirements for a high school diploma.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT In EDUCATION

LEGISLATION - OTHER STATES

The following summary (1996) is reprinted with permission from Parental Involvement in Education published by the Education Commission of the States (ECS), 707 17th Street, Suite 2700, Denver, Colorado, 80202-3427; 303-299-3600.

Increasingly, states are enacting legislation designed to increase parental involvement in the education process. States have addressed this issue in a variety of ways, such as requiring school districts to develop plans and policies to increase parental involvement, encouraging or directing employers to give parents time off from work to attend parent-teacher conferences or other school activities, encouraging parents to play a more active role in their children's education both at school and at home, as well as enacting parental rights legislation. In addition to the parental rights statutory provisions included below, constitutional amendments on parental rights have been introduced in at least 28 states over the past two years; however, only one has been approved. In Colorado, a parental rights constitutional amendment included on the November 1996 ballot was defeated.

State	Enacted	Summary
AR	1983 (amended 95)	"Believing that parents, as the primary teachers of children, can be more effective in helping their children at home if they have close contact with the schools and are familiar with their expectations and that such parents' involvement will contribute to increased achievement by their children," the state Department of Education must establish a program to train parents as teachers. The program must include, but is not limited to: courses offered to parents via educational television and accompanying materials and study guides; identifying teachers who are skilled in instructing parents; encouraging and training parent participants to instruct other parents; and establishing a statewide public information campaign stressing the role parents can play in their children's achievement at school. Requires local matching funds to operate parents as teachers programs. Districts and parents are not required to participate in this program. §6-10-109
AZ	1987 (amended 95)	Local governing boards must develop a policy to promote the involvement of parents and guardians, including: parent participation in homework, attendance, discipline; review of curriculum and materials; and setting procedures by which parents can withdraw children from activities to which they object. Plans may also include how to make parents more aware of this section, including identifying opportunities for parents to participate in and support classroom instruction, act as shared decision makers, etc. §15-102
CA	1995	Requires Superintendent of Public Instruction to develop and recommend ways that parents, teachers, and school districts can increase parental responsibility and involvement in their children's education. The Superintendent is required to develop a model pupil-school-parent compact which districts can use to develop their own plans. (Chapter 485, Statutes of 1995)

		which contain questions about the student's or parents' personal beliefs or practices in sex, family life, morality, and religion to students in grades 1-12, unless the parent is notified of the test in writing and gives written permission. § 51513 Prohibition also applies to exams given as part of the statewide pupil assessment program. Allows parents to request in writing that their child be excused from statewide assessments. §§ 60614-60615
	1994	Prohibits employers with at least 25 employees from firing or discriminating against an employee for taking up to 40 hours leave each school year to participate in school-related activities, subject to a limitation of 8 hours in any calendar month. The employee must give reasonable notice to the employer and may be required to provide proof of attendance. If the parent is "discharged, threatened with discharge, demoted, suspended, or in any other manner discriminated against in terms and conditions of employment," he/she must be reinstated and reimbursed for lost wages and work benefits that are a result of the employer's action. § 230.8 (Labor Code)
CO	1996	Supports parental involvement in the public schools and encourages parents to visit their children's classrooms at least once a semester. Encourages businesses with more than 10 employees to allow each employee at least 2 hours per school semester to attend parent-teacher conferences, special presentations, and school-related committees. Also encourages the recognition of businesses that show their commitment to children and education through their understanding of the importance of parental involvement. SJR 15
FL	1996	Adds parental involvement to state's education goals. Goal is for "communities, school boards and schools [to] provide opportunities for involving parents and guardians as active partners in achieving school improvement and educational accountability." § 229.591
IL	1990	A district can use up to two days allowed for teachers' institutes to conduct parent institutes. The institutes are to be designed by the school district in consultation with the district's teaching staff, administrators, and parents' organizations. Institutes will provide information to parents which the district deems necessary to support the following purposes: enhance parental involvement in the education of the district's students; improve parental communication and involvement with the district; increase parental knowledge of child development, district programs, school conditions, and societal problems threatening students; and improve parent skill development. § 5/10-22.18d
IN	1995 1995	Requires that mandatory school improvement plans include developing and maintaining efforts to increase parental involvement in educational activities. § 20-3.1-9.3 School corporations must allow parents to inspect all instructional materials used in connection with a personal analysis, evaluation, or survey concerning certain beliefs, affiliations, attitudes, behaviors, and habits. A student cannot be required to participate in a personal analysis, evaluation, or survey without the prior consent of the student (if he/she is an adult or emancipated minor) or the prior written consent of the student's parent if the student is an unemancipated minor. § 20-10.1-4-15

		right to exercise primary control over the care and upbringing of their children in their charge." Allows parents to bring an action in state court or any other court of jurisdiction for claims arising under this provision. § 38-141
IA	1991	State superintendent must hold quarterly meetings attended by representatives from public and private agencies to discuss ways to coordinate policies that promote parental involvement. Requires State Board to submit an annual report to the governor and House/Senate Education Committees. Requires State Department of Education, local school boards, and schools to name parent advocates who will develop strategies to increase parental involvement, resolve complaints from parents, and improve communication between schools and parents. Establishes an information clearinghouse of parental involvement within the state Department. Authorizes demonstration grants to school boards and other public and private agencies to develop innovative family-school educational partnership activities. §§17-406-406.5
IA	1996	Establishes a demonstration project to assess various models of parent outreach programs. Universal implementation is to occur by 1/1/97. Participation by parents during the demonstration projects and thereafter is voluntary. 71§ 84
	1996	Requires school districts to formally adopt policies giving parents the flexibility to exempt kids from any portion of the sex education curriculum upon written notification to the principal. District policies must be distributed by 9/1/97 and each subsequent year to principals and the State Department of Education. Sex education instructional materials must be made accessible to parents and others for review "to the extent practicable." 71§ 32A
	1982	Requires that courses not included in the regular curriculum be taught if there are at least 150 pupils in the school; the parents of at least 30 pupils or 5% of students enrolled in the high school, whichever is less, make a written request before 8/1; a qualified teacher is available; and the course is approved by 2/3 of the school committee. 71§ 13
MI	1995	"It is the natural, fundamental right of parents and legal guardians to determine and direct the care, teaching, and education of their children. The public schools of this state serve the needs of the pupils by cooperating with the pupil's parents and legal guardians to develop the pupil's intellectual capabilities and vocational skills in a safe and positive environment." § 380.10
	1995	In recognition of the right stated above, parents are allowed to review the curriculum, textbooks, and teaching materials and to "be present, to a reasonable degree, and at reasonable times and subject to reasonable restrictions, controls, and limits, to observe instructional activity in a class or course..." "Instructional activity" does not include testing. Policies or guidelines adopted under this provision "shall not create an unreasonable obstacle to teaching or learning, or to administering or maintaining proper discipline in a school or school program." § 380.1137
MN	1994	Requires the Dept. of Children, Families, and Learning to develop guidelines and model plans for parent involvement programs. § 126.69
MS	1992	Requires the State Board of Education to establish an awards program to reward parents for becoming involved in school improvement efforts. Each district is required to designate a Parent of the Year and one parent will be designated Parent of the Year for the state. §37-3-73

		effective parent involvement." Parent involvement plans are to be developed on the district level. The objectives are: to engage parents in supporting the schools; implement effective communication between the home and school; train administrators to involve parents at home and at school and to develop community support; and promote reading as the "key curricular activity for parental focus." §§ 37-3-61 - 37-3-71
NC	1993	Allows parents in both the private and public sectors to take four hours of unpaid leave from work so that parents can visit their children's schools for parent-teacher conferences, to volunteer, or visit their child's class. The leave must be at an agreed upon time and the employer can require the employee to make a written request 48 hours prior to the leave as well as furnish written verification that he/she visited the school. § 95-28.3
	1993	Encourages schools to include a comprehensive parent involvement program in performance-based accountability plans. § 115C-238.8
NE	1994	Encourages parental involvement in the public schools and requires each school district to adopt a policy by 7/1/95 defining the rights of parents regarding: a) access to textbooks, tests, and curriculum materials; b) provisions for attending and monitoring courses, assemblies, counseling sessions, and instructional activities; c) filing requests to exempt students from testing, classroom instruction, and other activities which parents find objectionable; d) access to student or school records; e) testing policies; and f) student participation in surveys and removal from the surveys if parents find the survey instrument objectionable. §§ 79-4,242 - 79-4,244
OK	1995	Allows parents to inspect curriculum and materials used in sex education classes and requires superintendents to notify parents of their right of inspection. Also requires superintendents to approve sex education curriculum and materials. Permits optional participation in sex education classes or programs if parent makes a written request. 70 § 11-105.1
	1989	Directs the State Board of Education to establish a program encouraging private employers to give employees leave to attend parent-teacher conferences at least once each semester. Also directs the State Board to require school boards to develop initiatives promoting schools as congenial places for parents to visit. Establishes State Board policy to encourage public schools to explore outreach opportunities, such as agreements with parents. 70 § 10-105.2
OR	1993	Recommends that school districts provide opportunities for parents to be involved in goals and decision making at the school site. Also recommends that employers recognize the value of parents and community members participating in the education process and encourages employers to extend appropriate leave to parents to allow greater participation during school hours. § 329.125
SC	1993	Directs the state education department to develop a parent involvement program for grades 4-8. Goals include: improving parental participation in their child's progress at school; ensuring a smooth transition between levels of schooling and phases of education; increasing communication; and providing greater accountability between parents, schools, and children. The program should include regular school visits by parents and involving parents, teachers, and administrators in school training sessions on issues such as communication, student discipline, importance of homework, the taking and understanding of standardized testing and test scores, and general literacy. § 59-1-454

		request after examining the instructional materials or conferring with the instructor, guidance counselor, or principal. A student cannot be penalized for grading purposes if he/she engages in alternative health or social studies lessons specifically assigned by the local board of education and if the student completes the lessons in a "timely and satisfactory manner." § 49-6-1303
	1989	Local boards must institute a program requiring parent-teacher conferences to be held twice a year for each student. § 49-6-7002
	1973	Local boards may develop a program for the voluntary participation of parents at school. Voluntary duties can include serving as an educational assistant, library assistant, hall monitor, recreation supervisor, as well as other activities that allow parents to observe school operations. A parent's participation must be varied. Local boards can periodically schedule alternate meetings to the regular PTA meeting to permit working parents to attend. § 49-6-7001
TX	1995	"Parents are partners with educators, administrators, and school district boards of trustees in their children's education. Parents shall be encouraged to actively participate in creating and implementing educational programs for their children." Parents are entitled to reasonable access to school administrators to request a change in their child's class or teacher as long as the change would not impact other students. Parents can request that: a class be added as long it is consistent with the required curriculum and it is economically feasible; a child be allowed to attend a class for credit above his/her grade level unless the local board does not believe the child will succeed; their child be allowed to graduate from high school early if requirements are fulfilled. Parents must have access to all of their child's records, state assessments, teaching materials, textbooks, tests, board meetings, as well as full information regarding the child's school activities, with the exception of child abuse records. "An attempt by any school district employee to encourage or coerce a child to withhold information from the child's parent is grounds for discipline." Schools must obtain the parent's written consent before they may conduct a psychological exam or treatment, unless it relates to a child abuse investigation, or make a videotape or audio recording of the child, unless the videotape or recording relates to safety, extracurricular, or classroom instructional activities. Parents may make a written request to remove a child temporarily from a class or activity if it conflicts with the parent's religious or moral beliefs. A parent cannot remove their child to avoid a test or to prevent the child from taking a class for the whole semester. These rights do not "exempt a child from satisfying grade level or graduation requirements in a manner acceptable to the school district and the [state education department]." Requires local boards to adopt a procedure to address complaints concerning the violation of any of these rights. §§ 26.001-26.012

UT	1996	Creates policy to have state boards and LEA's work with employers to develop policies and programs that would allow greater employee participation in the education system during school hours. Directs local school boards to adopt parent involvement policies designed to build "consistent and effective communication" between parents, teachers, and administrators and give parents the opportunity to be actively involved in their child's education. Statute also includes the following policies: to expect that parents will provide a home environment that values education and that they will send their children to school prepared to learn; to rely on school districts to provide opportunities for parents to be involved in establishing and implementing education goals; and to expect employers to recognize the need for parents and the community to participate in the public education system. § 53A-1a-105
	1996	Allows the use of centennial school moneys to train teachers and administrators to interact with parents and parent advisory groups. Extends the program to the year 2000. Statutory provisions are repealed as of 6/30/00. §53A-1a-303
	1994	Encourages public schools to use student education occupation plans to expand parental involvement and choice by allowing students and their parents, in consultation with school personnel, to select teachers, courses, and learning experiences that best meet the needs and interests of students. § 53A-15-101
	1994	Prohibits the administering of psychological or psychiatric examinations, tests, treatments, or surveys, analyses, or evaluations, in which the purpose or "evident intended effect" is to cause the student to reveal information such as the student's or family members' religious or political affiliations and beliefs, psychological problems, or illegal or sexual behavior, without the parent's prior written consent. Prohibitions also apply "within the curriculum and other school activities." § 53A-13-302
VA	1995	Directs school boards to provide opportunities for parental and community involvement in all schools. § 22.1-279.3
WA	1975 (Recodified in 1990)	School boards are required to adopt a policy giving parents access to their children's classroom and school-sponsored activities so they can observe class procedures, instructional materials, and class conduct. Parent observation must not disrupt the class or activity. § 28A.605.020
WI	1989	School boards are required to facilitate communication between school personnel and parents of pupils enrolled in the school district and provide volunteer opportunities for parents within the schools. § 119.78
50 States	Study Completed in 1994	Reported on parent involvement training as a licensing requirement for teachers and administrators in all states and D.C. Seven states (14%) require principals or central office administrators to study parent involvement or become proficient in promoting parent involvement; 15 states (29%) require most or all teachers to study or develop parent involvement skills; 6 states (12%) require jr. high/middle school teachers to study or achieve competence in encouraging parent involvement; 6 states (12%) require secondary teachers to study or become competent in promoting parent involvement; 14 states (27%) require elementary teachers to study or become competent in this area; 20 states (39%) require educators preparing to work in the field of early childhood education to study or develop skills in parent involvement; 26 states (51%) require teachers working with students with disabilities to study or become competent in this area.

APPENDIX E

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Sculptors

I dreamed I stood in a studio
And watched two sculptors there.
The clay they used was a young child's mind
And they fashioned it with care.
One was a teacher, the tools he used
Were books, music and art.
The other, a parent, used a guiding hand
And a gentle, loving heart.
Day after day the teacher toiled
With a touch deft, careful and sure.
While the parent labored by his side
And polished and smoothed it pure.
When at last their task was done,
They were proud of what they had wrought.
For the tings they had molded into a child
Could neither be sold or bought.
They each agree they would have failed
If each had to work alone,
For behind the parent stood the school
And behind the school, the home.

Author Unknown